

Mr. SCHILLING. Madam Speaker, I come before the floor of the House this morning to talk about the top issue of the Illinois 17th Congressional District, and that is the debt limit. The debt limit has been raised 51 times since 1978. Mr. Geithner has indicated that doing the same thing over and over again is insanity, and I tend to agree with him.

Where are we at today? \$14.2 trillion in debt. We reached the debt limit on May 16, 2011. Business owners such as myself share a message with people: it is time that we did the responsible thing and come up with some solutions so we stop the continuance of leaving this debt to our kids and our grandkids.

As a small business owner, I'm asking President Obama not to balance the budget on the backs of the small businesses across the United States of America. The thing that I understand as a small business owner is that in a downturn economy, the worst thing we can do here from Washington, DC, is raise taxes on small businesses. The reason why, and I use my business as an example is, in a downturn economy, I understand that raising prices on my product when people are already struggling to purchase a product is not the best thing to do. When my taxes go up, I can raise the price or I can let someone go. And, you know, as hard as it is to let someone go, that's what businesses will have to do because people won't be able to afford their product.

We need to try a different way, and that's why we are promoting a new train of thought here in Washington, DC. These 87 Members of Congress have changed the thought process of Washington, DC. We've changed the thought process from how much can we spend to how much can we cut. What we have also done is, we are trying to get Washington, DC, to focus in on wants versus needs and then prioritizing those out.

The President has even admitted that the overregulation needs to be addressed. Whether it is the EPA, OSHA, the overtaxing, the 1099 tax form that we just got repealed, the Small Business Administration says that businesses like my little pizzeria in Moline spend four-and-a-half times as much per employee to comply with environmental regulations than bigger companies. We spend three times more per employee on tax compliance than large businesses.

Congress needs to provide an environment with some economic certainties. We can do this by stopping tax increases on our job creators. My home State of Illinois, and quite frankly President Obama's State of Illinois, recently had the largest tax increase in the history of the State. It seems like every morning you open up the paper in Illinois and another business is threatening to leave. We can do something about this. We can provide our job creators with a certainty that with the unemployment rate at 9.2 percent, we don't need to add any more tax bur-

den or further any more overregulation.

HOME RULE FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, before I begin my remarks, I too want to acknowledge my good friend, LYNN WOOLSEY, for 20 really illustrious years in the Congress. I cannot imagine why she would want to end her illustrious career here so early. We will miss her.

I should warn Members of Congress that a peculiar part of the Financial Services appropriations, which comes to the floor this week, will seem particularly strange, even inappropriate. It is a historical anachronism, and I can only apologize for it. We must quickly make sure that we enter the 21st century on the District of Columbia local budget. Yes, it is our budget. We raise it all in the District of Columbia. We are American citizens.

Some have said, But the District of Columbia is mentioned and comes under the Constitution. So be it. I'm a constitutional lawyer; I concede that. But in their wisdom, after 150 years of shame, the Congress of the United States decided to grant home rule, as we call it, to the District of Columbia. So that instead of having a city of hundreds of thousands of Americans run by a Federal body, the Congress said that we delegate, we use our power under the Constitution to delegate to the District of Columbia the ability to elect its local officials, and raise its own money—we were raising our own budget all along. And spend its own money. For the most part Congress has adhered to this delegation by law. After all, we raise \$4 billion. That's more than some States.

It is, of course, the very essence of the principle of federalism embraced by both sides of the aisle of this body. Our federalism is what has held the Union together. We are a very different jurisdiction, so we have acknowledged different strokes for different folks. As if to reinforce that principle, a new crop of Republicans has come with federalism as a virtual original principle, giving new meaning to the notion of local control. Indeed, these new Republicans want the Federal Government out of even many Federal matters and to them turned back to the States. And so I imagine that the whole notion of the big foot of the Federal Government on the District of Columbia in local matters would particularly offend the new so-called "tea party" Republicans if they are adhering to their own principles.

The appropriation that will come before this body already intrudes on the District of Columbia with one rider, a rider involving abortion services for local women. That's embedded in it. If this Congress holds to principle, there certainly will be no more.

The world saw the reaction the last time the Congress tried to add attachments to the District of Columbia appropriation. It was in the budget deal of 2011. At a time when people in the Mideast were in the streets against their government, it was our government that went into the streets, and you saw elected officials from the top of the government, both the executive and the legislature, arrested in acts of civil disobedience because of intrusion on the way that the citizens of the District of Columbia spend their own local money. And the White House was not exempt. Residents also went to the White House and some were arrested right there because the White House agreed to the 2011 budget deal at the very last minute.

Now a new national organization composed of national organizations that themselves have millions of members across the United States have come forward to help us, and they have sent letters to Members of Congress saying that you will not be able to anonymously any more engage in intrusion on the local affairs of a local jurisdiction. We are activating our members to let them know if you intrude by voting for any attachment that takes away the ability of the District of Columbia to spend its own local funds as it sees fit. Local taxes, my friends, local issues. Not your business unless you raise the money.

Some of these issues are controversial. That also is the essence of federalism. We, of course, bow to the differences among us instead of trying to take away our rights to embrace those differences. Much that occurs in your district is enough to raise the hairs of my own citizens. We would not want to deprive you of your rights. We ask that you do not deprive us of ours. There will be consequences.

DEBT CEILING NEGOTIATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROKITA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROKITA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address the ongoing debt ceiling negotiations, or so they're called. The debt crisis currently facing our country is a grave one. Make no mistake, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has called the debt the greatest threat to our national security. Not Iraq, not Afghanistan, not al Qaeda, but our debt.

Since January 2009, \$3.7 trillion has been added to the national debt. Currently, our debt stands at \$14.3 trillion, and I'm told if you add in the cost, the present day cost of all of the promises that irresponsible people who have stood here before me have made to the American people, that the cost would be over \$70 trillion.

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Many Americans, including this one, can't even conceptualize that, can't count that high. And that's not their

fault; that's this body's fault. There is a lot of fearmongering going on by people who want us to spend more. They have seen these tactics work in the past—bank bailouts, massive spending bills.

Even if the calamity forecast were to come to pass, it doesn't change the fact that the debt crisis we face is our fiscal sin. Our generation and generations before ours are responsible for it; not my kids, not your kids, and not our grandchildren. If addressing it hurts in the short term, then I say so be it.

I reject the idea that we would pass this mess on to our kids for some short-term economic or political gain. That is one of the most piggish ideas I've ever heard, and it runs counter to the spirit that helped make this Nation great, an exceptional Nation. We own this mess. If we have to suffer a little bit in the short term to right our fiscal house in the long term, that's our duty, and it's our duty to fix it. It is debt that is hurting the economy and, don't forget, the misguided, big-government economic ideas that have been implemented over the last 2½ years.

These debt ceiling negotiations are a great opportunity to enact monumental reform within the Federal Government, making the future brighter for all Americans, so the next 2 weeks, my colleagues, are critical. We can do it, if we want to, in a bipartisan fashion. We must seize the opportunity. It is more important that we craft a deal that gets it right for the sake of our children and grandchildren than we implement a false fix driven by short-term thinking. Getting it right means enacting permanent and structural reforms to the way Washington spends. Raising taxes is not necessary and would only hurt the economy. Our government doesn't tax too little. Our government spends too much.

By "permanent and structural," I mean a balanced budget amendment. A balanced budget amendment would be hard for a future Congress or a future President to change, and it would force the necessary things that cause us to live within our means again. In order to raise the debt ceiling, the price for that concession must be the passage of permanent and structural reforms like the balanced budget amendment—period. There is no additional negotiation. There is no additional request. The request is to raise the debt ceiling \$2 trillion. Okay. Let's do it, but if we do it, let's make sure it never has to be done again. The only way to do that is through permanent and structural reforms like a balanced budget amendment. If the consequences of not raising the debt ceiling are as severe as some suggest, surely we can find the common ground necessary for a deal that forces our government to balance its budget like American families do every month.

I'm excited. Rarely does a legislative body have a chance to do something so monumental and so monumentally great. This would be among the most

significant reforms in our Nation's history. I don't know that an opportunity to enact a balanced budget amendment will be within our reach again for a very long time.

I do know I've only been around for 6 months on this floor, and no matter how long I or others stay, I think we will look back on the next 3 weeks as one of the best opportunities we will have ever had for making things better for our future, for our posterity. That ultimately is how we should look at every vote we take on this floor, not how it will benefit us in the here and now, but how it will benefit our children's chances to inherit what we did—the greatest, most exceptional Nation the world has ever known. I didn't come here to vote for us in the here and now. I came here to vote for our future.

Now is the time for bold, decisive action. Now is the time for a balanced budget amendment. Nothing short of the future of our children and grandchildren is at stake.

AMERICA NEEDS TO ADDRESS CAUSES, NOT EFFECTS, OF AMERICA'S ECONOMIC PREDICAMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, America's so-called "spending problem" directly relates to unemployment. Revenues just aren't growing fast enough because of unemployment. Yet Washington, D.C., is tied in knots over raising the debt limit and over how much more America has to borrow because our economy isn't growing fast enough to put millions of Americans back to work.

But you can't balance a budget unless people are working, because unemployment equals a loss of revenues with rising deficits. People know this. When they're out of work, they have deficits in their own family budgets, and they have to cut back. Our local school systems have to cut back because we know revenues aren't there, and certainly our Nation has to cut back when the revenues aren't coming in. Yet many inside Washington, D.C., have their eyes on the effect, not on the cause, of our predicament.

The principal cause of deficits is unemployment. Triggered by what? Triggered first by Wall Street corruption and greed. As well, deficits are triggered by growing trade deficits, which I will talk about in a second, due to the outsourcing of U.S. jobs, and rising deficits are due to endless wars.

America needs to address these causes, but Washington is addressing only effects. Again today, we have news that one of the principal causes of chronic unemployment and deficits is headed in the wrong direction. The United States trade deficit, our balance of goods and services accounts with other countries, is seriously hem-

orrhaging. In May, the U.S. trade deficit grew again—more in the red—by over \$50.2 billion. More lost jobs. Yes, the imports of higher priced oil keep pushing all of America deeper into the red. People know it because they're paying over \$4 a gallon when they fill up their cars with gas. I did that last night again.

America has a jobs problem, and that triggers the red ink. America has a jobs problem. That triggers the red ink. Wake up, Washington. America has a jobs problem.

In 1993, some Members here in Congress argued, Oh, pass NAFTA, over my strong objections, because it's going to create millions of jobs, and we will have this terrific trade balance with Mexico and Canada. Exactly the reverse happened. We have over \$1 trillion of trade deficit post-NAFTA, and there hasn't been a single year in which it has been balanced. Millions of U.S. jobs have been lost. And each year more red ink due to NAFTA stacks up—over a trillion dollars and counting.

Then in the late 1990s, the same Members said, Oh, let's sign the same kind of deal with China, and we did, over my strong objections again. Guess what happened? Millions more lost jobs in this country. In fact, the Manufacturing Policy Project estimates that there have been over 14 million jobs lost just in terms of NAFTA and PNTR.

We can no longer afford to add hundreds of billions of dollars annually to our trade deficit, because it throttles economic growth. It literally crushes it. It creates more unemployment in this country. Today, we are facing unsustainable levels of unemployment for the third year since the recklessness of Wall Street brought the economy crushing down after gas prices went up to over \$4 a gallon in 2007. The official unemployment rates today are over 9 percent, and this causes red ink at every level; but rather than focusing on job creation, Washington wants to give us more of these trade agreements, this time they say with South Korea, Colombia and Panama, using the same failed trade model that has resulted in huge trade deficits and more lost jobs.

Congress needs to address causes. We need to get our deficits under control by balancing our trade accounts and stopping job outsourcing. We need to get our deficits under control by putting people back to work. We need to get our deficits under control by ending endless wars, and we need to balance our accounts by making sure that Wall Street and the greedy who are getting a free ride pay their fair share.

America needs a results-oriented trade policy that creates jobs here in our country, with more exports going out than imports coming in, and a trade policy that holds our trade partners accountable. We don't need more NAFTA trade model-type agreements, which is what they're going to try to